



1948

Spennymoor
Urban District Council

REPORT

— OF THE —

Medical Officer of Health



Chairman of the Council, 1948-49.

Councillor T. W. Marley, J.P.

Vice Chairman :

Councillor H. Watcham.

Chairman of Health Committee :

Councillor G. H. Barrett.

Vice Chairman :

Councillor P. McKernon.

Chairman of Housing Committee :

Councillor T. W. Marley, J.P.

Vice Chairman :

Councillor F. Steel.

———— **COUNCILLORS** ————

G. Buckton, F. Coverdale, W. Hirst, B. Franks, T Liddle,
W. Lindsay, T. Sugden, Mrs B. Dobson, G. Thompson,
G. S. Rose, J, A. R. Clark, J Kelly, J. C. Glasner,
T. Mulloy, T N. Moulton. W. Elliott.

—— **Public Health Officers of the Authority** ——

Medical Officer of Health (Part Time) :

Dr. S. V. Tinsley, M.B. Ch.B , J.P.

Sanitary Inspectors :

M. W. Swales, M. R. San.I., A.M I.S.E.

G. Blenkinsop, Cert S.I B.

Clerical Assistant :

J B Storey

To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council of Spennymoor.

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour of presenting my Annual Report for the year 1948 at the end of my 25th year as your Medical Officer. It is a matter of great satisfaction to me that our relations have remained so happy over so long a period and that when I vacate my office, I shall leave the Area in a much healthier condition than it was on my appointment. Even further progress might have been made but for the somewhat parsimonious and short-sighted policy of our predecessors, especially in the matter of drainage. Our vital statistics are good apart from the Infantile Mortality rate, for which there is no specific reason. Considering the handicaps of the interrupted Housing planning and repairs, sewerage and drainage and many very necessary improvements in amenities which have been curtailed for many years, I consider that the Sanitary Circumstances of the District are satisfactory.

Population :

The Registrar General's figure calculated to the middle of 1948 give the resident population of the District as 19,720. This figure represents an increase of 850 upon last year, and exceeds the 1939 population figure of 19,040. The approximate population of the various wards is :—

Spennymoor Ward	6, 471
Low Spennymoor Ward	3, 635
Middlestone Moor Ward	1, 694
Kirk Merrington Ward	889
Byers Green Ward	1, 627
Tudhoe Ward	7, 203

Area :

The District covers 7,494 acres and includes the villages of Middlestone Moor, Byers Green and Kirk Merrington, with an average of :-

Spennymoor Ward	168 acres
Low Spennymoor Ward	551 acres
Middlestone Moor Ward	1,349 acres
Tudhoe Ward	2,699 acres
Byers Green Ward	1,115 acres
Kirk Merrington Ward	1,612 acres

Inhabited Houses :-

The estimated number of inhabited houses in the District according to our records at the end of December 1948, was 5,522.

Rateable Value :-

The Rateable Value of the District is £73,856 and the product of a penny rate £270 17 9

VITAL STATISTICS

Births 1948

<u>Live Births :-</u>	Male	Female	Total	Birth Rate
Legitimate	213	193	406	21.04
Illegitimate	4	5	9	
	217	198	415	

<u>Still Births :-</u>	Male	Female	Total	Still Birth Rate
Legitimate	4	2	6	.30
Illegitimate	-	-	-	
	4	2	6	

For comparative purposes the rates are given for the three previous years and for the three years immediately prior to the war :-

1936	Live Births	271	giving a Birth Rate of 17.5				per 1,000.			
	Still Births	18	„	„	„	„	„	1.17	„	„
1937	Live Births	318	„	„	„	„	„	17.20	„	„
	Still Births	16	„	„	„	„	„	.86	„	„
1938	Live Births	319	„	„	„	„	„	16.50	„	„
	Still Births	9	„	„	„	„	„	.46	„	„
1945	Live Births	356	„	„	„	„	„	19.70	„	„
	Still Births	14	„	„	„	„	„	.77	„	„
1946	Live Births	454	„	„	„	„	„	24.26	„	„
	Still Births	20	„	„	„	„	„	1.06	„	„
1947	Live Births	452	„	„	„	„	„	23.95	„	„
	Still Births	9	„	„	„	„	„	.47	„	„

The Birth Rate is 2.91 lower than last year, the Still Birth Rate is however, an improvement upon the previous year.

Comparison with National Statistics are satisfactory and extracts are enumerated as follows :

	Spennymoor District	England & Wales	126 County Boroughs	148 Smaller Towns.
Births	21.04	17.9	20.0	19.2
Still Births	.30	.42	.52	.43

Deaths--1948

	Male	Female	Total	Rate
Deaths	100	120	220	11.15
Infantile	11	10	21	50.40
Mortality	per 1,000 births			

Comparisons are given with the pre-war and post-war periods.

1936	Deaths	193 deaths giving a rate of 12.16 per 1,000
	Infantile	21 " " " " " 77.5 per 1,000
	Mortality	births
1937	Deaths	236 deaths giving a rate of 12.80 per 1,000
	Infantile	24 " " " " " 75.47 per 1,000
	Mortality	births

1938	Deaths	239 deaths giving a rate of 12.30 per 1,000
	Infantile	17 " " " " " 53.03 per 1,000
	Mortality	births
1945	Deaths	213 deaths giving a rate of 11.78 per 1,000
	Infantile	16 " " " " " 43.24 per 1,000
	Mortality	births
1946	Deaths	233 deaths giving a rate of 12.45 per 1,000
	Infantile	21 " " " " " 48.68 per 1,000
	Mortality	births
1947	Deaths	224 deaths giving a rate of 11.87 per 1,000
	Infantile	17 " " " " " 37.61 per 1,000
	Mortality	births

This is an improvement of .72 in the Death Rate upon last year. Infantile Mortality Rate has risen by 12.79 upon last year.

National Statistics are as follows

	Spennymoor District	England & Wales	126 County Boroughs	148 Smaller Towns
Deaths	11.15	10.8	11.60	10.70
Infantile	50.40	34	39	32
Mortality				per 1,000 births

Causes of Death	Males	Females
ALL CAUSES	100	120
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	2	3
Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	1
Measles	—	2
Acute infectious encephalitis	—	2
Cancer of buc: & cav: & œsoph; (M) uterus (F)	1	6
Cancer of stomach and duodenum	5	4
Cancer of the breast	—	3
Cancer of all other sites	8	8
Diabetes	1	—
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	16	18
Heart disease	23	38

Other diseases of circulatory system ...	4	2
Bronchitis ...	10	5
Pneumonia ...	5	5
Other respiratory diseases ...	4	1
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum ...	1	1
Diarrhoea under 2 years ...	—	1
Other digestive diseases ...	—	3
Nephritis ...	3	4
Premature Birth ...	1	3
Congenital malformation: birth injuries:	—	—
Infant; dis: ...	5	2
Suicide ...	1	—
Road Traffic accident ...	1	—
Other violent causes ...	4	3
All other causes ...	5	5

Tuberculosis 1948.

The following cases remained upon the register at the end of the year.

	Pulmonary	Non Pulmonary
Males	69	25
Females	70	30
	139	55

These figures show a slight decrease in the number of Pulmonary cases and a substantial reduction in Non Pulmonary cases upon the Register. The deaths from this disease show a reduction of 64·71% upon the previous year. The number of deaths represents 2·79% of the cases upon the Register at the beginning of the year, which shows a reduction of 5·21% on last year.

The number of known Tuberculosis cases in the District represent 98% of the Population, which is a reduction of 16% on the previous year.

Summary of Infectious Diseases notifications.

	Under one yr.	1-	3-	5-	10-	15-	25 & over
Scarlet Fever	—	3	10	33	24	5	2
Diphtheria					4		
Tuberculosis							
Males							
Pulmonary						4	8
Non Pulmonary		1		1	1		
Females							
Pulmonary			1	1		8	7
Non Pulmonary				1	1	1	1

Tabular Statement of the Notification of other
Infectious Diseases in the District during the year.

Diseases	Cases Notified
Scabies	12
Whooping Cough	128
Acute Poliomyelitis	2
Measles	293
Acute Pneumonia	41
Erysipelas	4
Cerebro-spinal Fever	3
Puerperal Pyrexia	3
Scarlet Fever	78
Diphtheria	4

Diphtheria Immunisation

The position of the District with respect to the Immunisation of the Child Population at the end of 1948, is tabulated below:-

	Under 5 years	5-15 years
(1) Estimated number of Children residing in the Area, 30th June, 1948.	1,915	3,102
(2) Total number of Children Immunised to 30th June, 1948	509	1,813
(3) Percentage of Child Population considered to be Immunised up to 30th June, 1948	26 58%.	58 45%.
(4) Number of Children Immunised 1st January—30th June, 1948	113	2

During the year the estimated Child Population of the District has been amended and this has caused an increase in the percentage of Immunised Children under 5 years.

The Council's responsibilities for Immunisation were transferred to the County Council during the month of July, under the National Health Act 1946. Our records therefore, relate only to the first half of the year.

Scabies

The number of cases treated at the Cleansing Centre from this District during the year was 42 cases as against 50 cases during the previous year. The Council's Cleansing Centre in Cheapside has dealt with all cases sent in by the Doctors from this District, also cases from Sedgefield R. D. Council and the Crook and Willington U. D. Council areas. During the year, 78 cases have been treated and 160 Treatments given, as against 98 cases and 202 treatments for the previous year.

The Majority of the cases treated at the Centre are of a mild type, indicating the efficiency of our arrangements for treatment during this post-war period.

Ambulance Service

In July of last year the Ambulance Service was taken over by the County Council under the National Health Act. The Council therefore lost the control of a service of which they had every right to be proud. From the inauguration at the end of the War, the calls upon this service increased and fully justified the decision to provide an efficient service available to every person in the district, at moderate charges.

The County Council Ambulance Service is designed to cover the whole Country, linked with County boroughs and adjoining County authorities. Calls are accepted by the County Service from responsible people and no charge is made.

The Council are not apparently entitled to any reimbursement for the taking over of the two ambulances and the other equipment by the County authority. As these vehicles and equipment were purchased out of the rates and not by a loan, they were handed over free of debt.

During the six months of the year the service operated under the Council, 604 cases were conveyed to and from hospitals in the area and the ambulances covered a distance of 12,646 miles in this work.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District .

SUMMARY OF NOTICES AND WORK DONE IN THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S DEPARTMENT, DURING THE YEAR.

I Public Heath Acts

		Number of Informal written Notices by Inspector.	Number of Formal Notices by order of Authority.	Number of Nuisances abated after Notices.
Dwelling-houses and Schools	} Structural Defects.	207	27	177
Dairies and Milkshops	...	3	—	2
Cowsheds	...	6	—	5
Bakehouses	...	1	—	1
Ashpits and Privies	...	3	—	3
Deposits of Refuse and Manure		1	—	1
House Drainage Other Faults		262	—	262
Water Supply	...	2	—	2
	Totals	485	27	453

II Water, Food and Drugs

Samples of water taken for Analysis	...	1
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III Precautions against Infectious Disease

Lots of Infectious Bedding stoved or destroyed	...	89
Houses disinfected after Infectious Disease	...	191
Schools „ „ „ „	...	1

IV General

Number of New Houses erected during year	...	200
Number of such Houses occupied during year	...	200
Ashclosets converted to Water-closets, during year	...	80
Total number of Water-closets in the District	...	1,937
Total number of Ash-closets in the District	...	3,586
Total number of Ashpit-privies in the District	...	84

Infestation :

The Council have continued their policy of Fumigation of all Tenant's Furniture in transit, before occupying Council and North Eastern Housing Association property. This work has been carried out most efficiently by the London Fumigation Company using hydrogen cyanide as a fumigant. The Council's insistence of the need for this fumigation has been amply borne out by the condition of the Van after many of these removals.

During the year, 179 fumigations and removals were carried out by the above method, and many fumigations of property and furniture were carried out to other property at the request of the owners or tenants.

Rodent Control :-

The Council is still carrying out the powers delegated to it by the County Council in this connection. The part-time Rodent Operator has carried out inspections and treatments of all likely sources of infestation in the District, and as we have the goodwill and co-operation of the public, any source of infestation is dealt with expeditiously and effectively. The Rodent Operator also attended a refresher course of training at Newcastle, arranged by the Ministry.

The work of the Rodent Operator is tabulated below :-

Premises Treated	Estimated Kill	Bodies Found
Shops & Business Premises	7	15
Private Property	25	6
Refuse Tips etc.	4	

Water Supply :-

The District is served by a piped supply of water, obtained from upland gathering grounds, under the control of the Durham County Water Board. Certain isolated farms and cottages obtain their supplies from springs and wells. A high degree of purity is maintained by the Water Board and the water is adequate in quantity.

Meat & Other Foods Inspection :-

All slaughtering of animals for human consumption was transferred at the outbreak of War to a Ministry slaughter house at Bishop Auckland, the meat being conveyed by lorry to an allocation centre at Spennymoor and then to the various retail establishments. Congestion at the slaughter house, and the considerable handling to which this carcase meat is subjected, does not improve its quality or fitness for consumption. I am of the opinion that all meat required for consumption should be slaughtered at one establishment in this District, thus reducing considerably, the subsequent handling before delivery to consumers.

Sewerage & Sewage Disposal :-

With the exception of certain isolated property with cesspool or other drainage, the whole of the district is sewered, the Council's disposal works at Byers Green and Tudhoe treat this sewage. The village of Kirk Merrington is drained to disposal works at Leasingthorne, operated by the Bishop Auckland U. D. Council under arrangement.

The Council have not proceeded with there pre-war scheme of resewering of certain areas of the District. During the year certain private property has been subjected to flooding during stormy weather. Cesspools serving private property have been regularly cleaned and inspected.

The number of complaints of choked drains in private property continue to be high, many of the drains serving old property are badly constructed and liable to frequent choking. This will continue until we are allowed to take action under the Housing Act 1936, with respect of the property.

Refuse & Salvage Collections :-

The whole of the Urban District is cleansed by direct labour, four lorries and five Carts being used for this work, with an additional Lorry engaged solely in the collection of Trade Refuse and Trade Salvage.

1,825 Dustbins, 3,586 Ashclosets are emptied weekly and 84 Ashpit Privies once in every three weeks. During the year 80 Ashclosets were converted to the "Water Carriage System". No large scale of conversions were carried out. I strongly recommend the Council to reconsider the amount of the grant of £3-10-0 towards conversions costing six to eight times this amount. We cannot expect to reduce materially the number of these very insanitary receptacles, with such a disparity between actual cost of conversions and grant.

Salvage is also collected at the same time as the refuse, sacks being used for this purpose upon each vehicle. During the Year the following materials were collected and sold :-

	Tons	Cwts
Waste Paper	137	19½
Metal	23	18¾
Waste Food	8	9¼
Rags & String	—	19¼
Bones	—	15½
Bottles & Jars	14 doz.	

Waste Paper collections have been increased by 50% during the Year and constitutes the major source of revenue from Salvage, contributing £831-6-9 of our total income of £857-17-2 from this source. It is hoped therefore, that we

will continue to find this profitable outlet for material which otherwise would have to be disposed of as a charge to the rates.

Housing :-

For information, the Council's pre-war and post-war Housing Programme is summarised below :-

Clearance and Individual Unfit Property :-

Period 1935-36.

The Council dealt with by Clearance.	175 Houses
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Period 1937-39.

Under Section 25, Housing Act. 1936

The Council dealt with	...	...	506 Houses
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Under Section 11, Housing Act. 1936.

The Council dealt with	...	...	51 Houses
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New Houses :-

Period 1936-38.

Council and North Eastern Housing Association.

North Eastern Housing Association

Erected	...	...	...	...	280 Houses
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Urban Council erected	...	66 Houses
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Period 1945-48.

North Eastern Housing Association.

Erected	...	...	...	...	112 Houses
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Urban Council erected	...	166 Houses
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Tenants removed from Clearance Property.

Demolished for New Housing Sites.	62 Houses
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The Council's immediate building programme provides for the erection of the following :-

Park Estate	...	...	...	...	88 Houses
George Street, Developement Estate	...				108 Houses
York Hill Estate	...	..	..		128 Houses
Tudhoe Moor Estate	...	...	...		122 Houses
Kirk Merrington Estate	...		...		50 Houses
Middlestone Moor Estate	...		...		300 Houses

During the Year, 438 Applications were received for houses, bringing the total since December 1945, to 1,746. Tenants removed to Council property during this period was 205 of this number 14 were Key Workers at Trading Estate factories.

Allocation of Houses was made by the Council in accordance with their "Points Scheme", to tenants with the highest aggregate number of points in the various types of houses. A small number of houses were allocated to "Special Cases", such as Tubercular Cases, or other cases whose circumstances the Council did not consider were satisfactorily covered by the above scheme.

Considerable progress has been made in reducing the numbers of applications requiring two and three bedroomed accommodation, due to the completion of non-traditional type houses, such as B. I. S. F. and Orlet three bedroomed types and two bedroomed pre-fabricated bungalows.

The Council's immediate housing programme provides for a number of four bedroomed and Old People's bungalows, in addition to two and three bedroomed types.

Factories Act, 1937

No complaints have been received during the year from H. M. Inspector of Factories of contraventions found in factories, and requiring action by the Council. A number of visits have been made to factories registered under Part 1. of the above Act.

S. V. TINSLEY,
Medical Officer of Health

M. W. SWALES,
Sanitary Inspector.

